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ABSTRACT

The history and philosophy of the adult learner are reviewed with regard to how far the movement to education has gone in higher education. Trends and implications of adult participation in higher education are discussed. The adult learner is compared with traditional-aged students, his learning ability is examined, and a conceptual framework for adult programs is described. The impact of the adult learner on the university is discussed in terms of: academic quality; responsibility in an urban setting; the "new" clientele and the "old" image; developing a nontraditional curriculum (i.e., faculty involvement, flexibility, evaluation, continuing education, and instructional technology); changing institutional practices such as admissions and counseling, campus life, and financial problems. Five policy statements and their implications are suggested. A seven-page bibliography is included. (LBH)

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THE UNCOMMON SCHOOL

The Adult Learner in the University

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School of Education, The University of Michigan
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THE UNCOMMON SCHOOL

The Adult Learner in the University

by

David Edward Schlaver

Center for the Study of Higher Education
School of Education
The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

August 1977

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PREFACE

There have always been eloquent spokespersons on the subject of "lifelong learning" and, with a minimal search through the pages of our own lives, we each recognize men and women who have inspired us by their lifelong zest for learning. Yet to a very great extent the educational system we have come through and to which we are now devoting our talents and lives does little to bring together the noble rhetoric and the living reality that surrounds us.

My unabashed goal is to get university educators to think more clearly in this direction. I have attempted to draw together the diffuse literature on adult education for one specific purpose: to enable university administrators and faculty to see and judge its applicability to their situation. Colleges on the junior and senior level are by and large already coming to grips with the older student, but universities have, for many good reasons, been slower to respond.

While the urgency of this issue may not be as strong as many others facing university educators, there is, I think, considerable educational value in a carefully designed courtship of the adult learner in the university. The extra time available to our universities to plan their response should make it all the more beneficial to the institutions and to the individuals who look to them at non-traditional times in life. We all know that pressures and constraints sometimes bring the best out of us, but we also like to think that--given time--we could do better. Time is still on our side; may our response be equal to it.

David Edward Schlaver
Ann Arbor, Michigan
May 1, 1977

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I. THE ADULT LEARNER IN THE UNIVERSITY--AN OVERVIEW

We boast that we belong to the ninetteenth century
and are making the most rapid strides of any nation.
But consider how little this village does
for its own culture. . . .
We have a comparatively decent system of common schools,
schools for infants only;
but excepting the half-starved Lyceum in the winter,
and latterly the puny beginning of a library
suggested by the state, no school for ourselves. . . .
It is time that we had uncommon schools,
that we did not leave off our education
when we begin to be men and women.
It is time that villages were universities,
and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities,
with leisure--if they are indeed so well off--
to pursue liberal studies the rest of their lives. . . .
Alas! what with foddering the cattle and tending the store,
we are kept from school too long,
and our education is sadly neglected. . . .
This town has spent seventeen thousand dollars
on a townhouse, thank fortune or politics,
but it probably will not spend so much on living wit,
the true meat to put into that shell,
in a hundred years. . . .
As the nobleman of cultivated taste surrounds himself
with whatever conduces to his culture,--genius--learning--
wit--books--paintings--statuary--music--
philosophical instruments, and the like;
so let the village do,--not stop short at a pedagogue,
a parson, a sexton, a parish library, and three selectmen,
because our pilgrim forefathers got through
a cold winter once on a bleak rock with these.
To act collectively is according to
the spirit of our institutions. . . .
New England can hire all the wise men in the world
to come and teach her, and board them 'round the while,
and not be provincial at all.

That is the <u>uncommon</u> school we want.
Instead of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men.
If it is necessary, omit one bridge over the river,
go round a little there,
and throw one arch at least
over the darker gulf of ignorance which surrounds us.

--Henry David Thoreau, 1854

Toward A Definition of "Adult Learner"

The vast majority of students in the modern university are chronologically and legally adults. Historically, however, they have not been considered adults, but rather "youth"--18 to 22 years old--on the threshhold of adulthood, preparing for life, learning to take their place in an adult world. Even many of the professional and graduate students are only a year or two older, having progressed to postbaccalaureate status with no more than a summer pause or perhaps a year to replenish their empty coffers before another stint as a "student". Some of them cannot break stride for fear they will no longer be acceptable to deans or departments. Others prefer the relatively protected world of the academy and are not at all anxious to enter the workaday world.

Our educational system has encouraged this prolonged transition period, since we have found it easier--or perhaps more satisfying--to deal with the homogeneous age group which naturally gravitates to the campus. There have always been outliers--the returning veteran, the late-blooming youth who finally "settles down" to study, the evening student who commutes to the urban campus or extension, taking one course at a time. But the accommodation has generally been slight, halfhearted, and difficult; and the results never fully integrated into our philosophy of education.

We are now being asked to begin this integration of people and of "conflicting" purposes. Events in the higher educational realm have a way of forcing issues like this--albeit slowly and usually gracefully. Adult learners, though numerous, are hardly organized and beating on our doors. In a sense, they have slipped into our institutions unknown to many of us; they have entered and done well in spite of the many barriers we have consciously or unconsciously erected, and now they are beginning to have an inevitable impact on the system.

They have not necessarily been unwanted guests. Some institutions have courted them--occasionally less for educational purposes than financial. Others have been surrounded by them and transformed by the sheer facts of geography and demography. Few institutions, however, have seen the inherent possibilities in the presence of adult learners, and have consciously tried to adapt their programs to "adult" needs and interests. But more and more, this is what we are all being called upon to do. If the impact of the adult learner on the traditional university up to now has been slight, it promises to become much greater in the near future. The vast and hitherto mostly shapeless realm of postsecondary education is coming to realize that people want more options in education throughout their lives.

To put it simply, an adult learner is an "older" person coming into a program where only traditional-aged students have been. The participant is beyond the normal college age. For the most part he is continuing his education on a part-time basis. Adult learners are seeking "to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge or sensitiveness" (Houle, 1972:32).

Historically, the university has passed on to the younger generation the intellectual traditions and achievements of the past, trying to help them to understand the world they were about to enter as adults. Thus in one sense the adult learner is intruding on a terrain that is clearly not ready to deal with him. But this intrusion stems from an inherent feeling on the adult's part that the university is "the place to be". The university has long symbolized the capstone of learning in our society, the place where knowledge is discovered and communicated. The university is not the only place where the adult can continue to learn, but for those who love learning, it is the place where learning seems to be most loved.

Thus it is imperative that the university respond to his sincere search for wisdom. In fact, the university has created this phenomenon by raising the educational level of so many in our society. Often those who have had a taste of learning are the very ones who want to keep on learning.

Higher Education and the Adult Learner

We have all lived through years of changes in society and in the conditions which touch people's lives: burgeoning population, expanding technology, multiplied opportunities, and increasing demands. Changes of this sort ultimately shake the assumptions that Americans have about what they can and cannot do with their adult lives. Continuing learning not only becomes an increasingly feasible option, but in many cases a necessity.

The major universities have, for the most part, relied upon high-school graduates for their incoming student body. Once the students are "in residence" they pursue their studies without interruption up to a "degree". Changes brought about by universal access have now begun to have an impact on many of the colleges and universities of this country. The demographic data leave little doubt that enrollments will decline in future years if institutions rely primarily upon their usual clientele for incoming students (Parker, 1976:11).

While status and image may "protect" many universities from

these trends, they still bear watching. Many institutions will be forced to enlarge their pool of potential students considerably in future years. In doing so, it will be wise and certainly expedient to look at the new clientele who are interested in higher education--adults, part-time students, minorities, community college transfers, women returning to school after beginning their families, professionals trying to "keep up" with their field.

The educated youth of today may in fact become the obsolete adult of tomorrow unless he continues his education; and in what better place than the same institution where he first began to learn? Those institutions forced to find new students may also find that an expanded mission is in the best interests of their total endeavor. The changing demands of society may ultimately lead all institutions to reevaluate their educational missions.

I start with an assumption that the traditional system can be flexible enough to meet the future educational needs of both younger and older adults. Our history shows that lifelong learning is not a new concept. Education begins in childhood and progresses into maturity where it is expected to become self-directed. Unfortunately, in devising our system "the American public became obsessed with the idea of education for children. It was an easy next step to become convinced that this is the only kind of education there is" (Houle, 1956:55). Today the pressures of rapid change in life and work are forcing us to rethink our mission.

The university has long prided itself on being a close-knit "community of scholars", young and old. This concept has now become much more difficult to embody with reality. The faculty "community" has over the years become much more specialized and discipline-oriented. The student body, while growing in heterogeneity, has also taken on a less "residential" quality which has always seemed to be necessary for a community. The administrator, long expected to be both catalyst and leader of the community, often finds himself alone, somewhere in the middle, beleaguered on both sides of most issues.

We have seen the virtual disappearance of <u>in loco parentis</u>, and while most institutions still profess to "care" about their students, we find that "caring" is less definable than before. If our students are to become full participants in the community, we must make sure that our efforts are centered on them. As their needs change, so must our response. But our response must break out of the forms, requirements, and trappings of a prior age.

An institutional response should be carefully considered and

cautiously implemented. Above all a university must preserve its integrity as a place of higher learning. We, as educators, must demonstrate our love for students who come to us to share their minds and hearts, and our commitment to form a community of scholars, young and old. In trying to preserve these ideals, we will hopefully realize how far short we have fallen up to now. In our rush to satisfy the growing vocational and career concerns of our traditional students, have we in fact been losing the broad general approach which has characterized the best of universities? In our love for students have we been too selective, loving only those who "qualify" according to our elitist standards? In our efforts to build a community of scholars have we forgotten that students, too, come in all sizes and shapes, and all ages?

These and other questions must be considered. I will attempt to look at the history and philosophy of the adult learner, and see how far the movement to educate him has gone in higher education. I will look at his needs and characteristics in comparison with our traditional students. I will analyze the adult's ability to learn and how we can design better learning situations for him.

To change the mission of an institution cannot be done quickly or spuriously. We must look carefully at the impact the adult learner is having in all of higher education and would have upon our own institutions were we to court him. When all is said and done, we must finally decide. After looking at these issues, we can hopefully make recommendations and decisions with more confidence that they are the right ones.

II. ADULT EDUCATION--PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Pedants sneer at an education
which is useful.
But if education is not useful,
what is it?
Is it a talent,
to be hidden away in a napkin?
Of course, education should be useful,
whatever your aim in life.
It was useful to Saint Augustine
and it was useful to Napoleon.
It is useful,
because understanding is useful.

--Alfred North Whitehead

Historical Background

"To educate" has both the connotation of "bringing up"--normally applied to children, and "leading out"--which can perhaps be applied to adults. Throughout history, both seem to have been essential aspects of education. Socrates may have been condemned for corrupting the youth of Athens, but he also was guilty of leading adults where they didn't want to go. Although he never conducted a formal school, he held extensive dialogues with whatever adults he could draw into discourse on the marketplace. He was a "gadfly to the adult conscience of Athens" (Brubacher, 1966:355). Plato, his disciple and scribe, institutionalized education for the "guardian class" to be continued throughout their adult years.

Jesus Christ loved the children, but he spent his short teaching career with adults. The Christian theological controversies of the Middle Ages can perhaps be looked at as an early form of adult education. Later the Sunday sermons from the pulpit had a significant effect on sixteenth and seventeenth century adults. The Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794) said that "education should not cease when the individual leaves school. It should be of concern to all ages; for there is no age at which it is not possible and profitable to learn" (Brubacher, 1966:355).

In our own country, adult education began at the beginning. It had a strong vocational direction--the apprenticeship system--learning a trade so that the poor would not be dependent upon public support. But from very early, the "American dream"--the notion that every person can get ahead if he is willing and works hard--which has so greatly influenced the growth of education in this country, began to develop.

Sixteen short years after the Puritans landed in Massachusetts, they founded Harvard College--in 1636. A state law of 1642 directed town governments to hold parents and masters responsible for teaching the young to read and write. Private schools began to provide secondary education. The Church, as in Europe, provided a universal opportunity for education. Both the Sunday sermon and midweek lectures touched many people. Later the tavern and the village store began to rival the Church as the most important form of intellectual activity for adults (Knowles, 1962:3-9). Four attitudes are apparent from the beginning in American education:

1. Education should be inspired by felt practical needs.
2. Education is a powerful and effective tool for the satisfaction of practical needs: Knowledge is power.

3. Education should be public; it should be available to every prospective citizen.
4. Education is a governmental responsibility; government should encourage and actively sponsor education (Carey, 1961:14).

Benjamin Franklin, the apostle of self-improvement, founded the Junto in 1727, as a discussion club "to explore such intellectual problems as morals, politics, and natural philosophy" (Knowles, 1962:10). Out of this type of group grew libraries and museums, historical societies, theaters, and the beginnings of our mass media. One by one, colleges were founded in the colonies and the beginnings of a system of higher education across the new land were evident.

The main thrust was obviously toward the education of adults--the betterment of their intellect, awareness of the political realities, and eventually education for democratic citizenship. Indeed, the first rumblings of our American Republic were based on the abilities of adults to learn and govern themselves. The documents of the revolutionary period, the speeches and broadsides, were widely distributed and discussed. Newspapers multiplied rapidly and very soon covered the new land with new ideas.

In 1826, Josiah Holbrook organized the Lyceum, named after Aristotle's garden in Athens. Its purpose was to enlarge educational opportunities for adults. Within eight years, 3000 local Lyceums were scattered throughout the country (Boorstin, 1965:314-15). The national movement did not persist for long, but many local Lyceums continued to operate until the Civil War and some beyond, to mobilize public opinion and produce general intellectual stimulation by exposing local citizens to the ideas of American thinkers. It was plainly an adult educational purpose that kept it going.

The heart of the Lyceum activity was a public lecture followed by a general forum, "a kind of educational evangelism..." (Boorstin, 1965:315). But later in the century, the clergyman, "who from his pulpit had been the chief agent of adult education, began to be replaced by the professor, who as the harbinger of scientific advances, cleared the way for expanding curriculum and the rise of the elective system" (Carey, 1961:16).

The professor often had to go outside of his institution in order to find listeners for his public lectures. The Lyceum had started in that way. But eventually loosely connected extension programs were begun. The Board of Columbia College drew up its first plan for extension teaching in 1830. This was less an adult program than an alternative to the classical curriculum, particularly for

young men employed in business and industry (Burrell, 1954:3), as were many of the evening schools founded in the mid-1900's.

Colleges were rapidly expanding throughout the land. Most of them were private. By 1861, 182 had been founded. The development of a state-controlled system took a leap forward in 1862 when the Land-Grant College Act was passed. This extensive system which was to take shape in the second half of the nineteenth century, provided "the home base for the most extensive adult education program ever created" (Knowles, 1960:14).

It soon became clear that the colleges scattered about the country were much too rooted for a rapidly moving population. Other modes of education were desperately needed, without dormitories and classrooms, rigid curriculum and fixed faculty (Boorstin, 1965: 314-15). Other institutional forms began to take shape. The Chautauqua Institution, founded in 1874 as a normal school for Sunday-school teachers, caught on rapidly. William Rainey Harper, later to found the University of Chicago, was a popular Chautauquan lecturer. The program broadened to include every aspect of culture. Originally a summer school, there was increasing demand for winter programs and even correspondence courses were developed under Harper's direction (Knowles, 1960:15-16). At the University of Chicago, Harper used his experience to provide for the people who could not attend regular classes on the campus.

Charles Van Hise, another Chautauquan product, introduced many of the extension services at the University of Wisconsin. His idea was to extend the borders of the campus to the borders of the state. Extension programs were started at many state institutions in the late 1800's. An extensive program of agricultural training and the rudiments of industrial and vocational education were included. The evening schools began to attract adults in increasing numbers. Their enrollments rose in both size and age level. And their curriculum broadened in four ways:

1. Expansion of "Americanization" programs for immigrants.
2. Expansion of vocational courses, especially in trade and commercial subjects.
3. Extension into secondary and college-level subjects.
4. Experimental sorties into informal adult education (Knowles, 1960:19).

In 1923, Frederick Keppel, new president of the Carnegie Corporation, began an investigation of the part played by adult edu-

cation in American democracy and the general welfare. This led to the founding of the American Association for Adult Education in 1926. The term "adult education" had scarcely been known until this time, yet the concept had always been important in America. The extreme mobility of the young nation had kept the movement as "typically undefined and fluid as American life itself" (Adams, 1944:12). But after World War I, there was pressure for integration at both national and local levels. Private foundations had begun large scale support, Kellogg and Ford in addition to Carnegie. Government support was also expanding.

During the Depression the need for adult education was seen in stark reality. The Civilian Conservation Corps, begun in 1933, was not considered an educational opportunity at first, but within a few years it was described as the American "folk school" movement. The New Deal's progressive thrust in education was further demonstrated by the Works Progress Administration: 1.5 million adults were involved in this enterprise.

> What remained was a legacy of concern: teachers emerged from the Depression sensitized as never before to the educational predicament of out-of-school youth and to the public's responsibility for contending with it (Cremin, 1964:324).

The potential for social change inherent in adult education began to be discovered during and after World War II. Even though adult programs continued to occupy a secondary status in the schools, the possibilities were gradually coming to light. The entire adult population was seen as a potential student body. The influx of veterans on most college campuses after the War resulted in strained facilities, but a boon to adult education and the responsibilities of colleges for it. Programs had to be modified and modes of instruction changed dramatically.

Even though many of the veterans were only a few years out of high school, the experiences they had been through caused a significant change in colleges' attitudes toward older students. This was the beginning of the movement toward nontraditional education for adults. The early programs could hardly be called innovative, but the questions that were later to dominate our own times began to be asked. Universities began looking for their own unique functions and started to see the "adult" as a different breed of student requiring different adaptations and course offerings. The Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education in 1947 summarized the necessary changes:

> The time has come to expand considerably our program of adult education, and to make more of it the responsibility of our colleges and universities.
>
> The crisis of the time and the rapidly changing conditions under which we live make it especially necessary that we provide a continuing and effective educational program for adults as well as youth. We can in this way, perhaps, make up some of the educational deficiencies of the past, and also in a measure counteract the pressures and distractions of adult life that all too often make the end of formal schooling the end of education too (in Hofstader & Smith, 1961:986).

The adult education movement had come a long way from the turn of the century when the conservative Commissioner of Education William Harris championed the extension movement as a preservation of the power of the upper classes. He thought it would help the masses resist the demagogic and sensational appeals of the popular newspapers. By supporting it, the upper class could only benefit (Curti, 1935:332).

The 1950's saw the slow beginning of experimental degree programs on a number of college campuses. Many community colleges were founded during the 50's and 60's and, although necessary to accommodate the geometrically growing student population, began to compete with the traditional colleges and universities for students. By 1970 they enrolled nearly one-half of the high school graduates going to college. Their strong vocational emphasis threatened the very roots of the time-honored liberal education tradition in many colleges.

Colleges and universities were thus forced to look more seriously at the situation brought about by the clamor of adults for more learning.

> Education for adults, in innumerable forms, had been in process from the beginning of our history, ...but no one talked about it. It was so inchoate and so inextricably entangled with life that, like life itself, most of it was simply taken for granted.... Because school, and perhaps college, alone were considered as education, and because only children and youth received it, the idea grew that education was something not intended for adults. It was even felt that they were in-

> capable of gaining it formally, and that it was unnecessary for them anyway, and beneath their dignity (Adams, 1944:136).

The phenomenal period of growth experienced by most institutions in the 1960's meant possible expansion into new areas. Government and foundation money enabled them to start centers for continuing education, to develop new educational technologies, and to expand their offerings to a broader segment of the population. But internal turmoil and conflicting interests coupled with the external pressures of the late 60's brought a rather sudden end to the growth on many campuses. Since 1970 many institutions have been forced to consolidate the gains of the past and to rethink purposes and priorities. In this ongoing process they may have to look more closely at the role of the adult learner in the university.

Recent Philosophical Development

From this brief historical overview we can see that "the institutions of adult education have typically emerged in response to specific needs, rather than as a part of a general design for the continuing education of adults" (Knowles, 1960:26).

Further, adult education has implications for elementary and secondary education: Eventually the entire formal educational system will have to be thought of as preparatory for the lifelong education demanded by a constantly changing world. But adult continuing education must be seen as much more than an appendage to the elementary-secondary-higher educational system. For many adults it takes on a certain amount of formality, much as the rest of education. Although learning takes place over a lifetime, the experiences of life may not provide enough structure or purpose to be sufficient for the education of all individuals in our society. Some opportunities must be structured and their prestige must be bolstered.

Thus, we must constantly try to articulate a philosophy for adult education. What does it mean to our society and to the individuals who live within it? Education that begins and ends at a specific time in life is not sufficient to meet the needs of our society. Rather, it must be offered, formally as well as informally, on a lifelong basis. In the absence of any integrated philosophy for adult education, we must try to come up with one which is applicable to our own particular institutions within the "learning society". To do this we must start with at least two inquiries: first, what should the goals of adult education be, and second, how can the institutions of society work together to attain these goals?

All education in its essence should be humanizing. Its purpose is to liberate people, to make them as human as possible, to develop their talents and creative spirit. Adult education is an essential part of this philosophy, since it must be done in relationship with the education of youth so that it will have a degree of continuity. Adult education should help the learner to find meaning for his life, to understand his talents and limitations, and to relate to others--to learn "how to learn" so that he can survive and thrive in relationship to other persons.

> If we believe what we profess concerning the worth of the individual, then the idea of individual fulfillment within a framework of moral purpose must become our deepest concern, our national preoccupation, our passion, our obsession. We must think of education as relevant for everyone everywhere--at all ages and in all conditions of life (Gardner, 1961:141).

Since there is no central authority over adult education, the responsibility is dispersed throughout society and every institution contributes in some way to it. Some recognize a broad responsibility for the general adult population; others achieve limited objectives normally as an extension of their primary function. Our formal system has by and large separated education from the business of life and has been seen as something for the young. The danger in trying to accommodate the adult student in this system is that it prolongs the formal separation. As the Carnegie Commission has recognized:

> Society would gain if work and study were mixed throughout a lifetime, thus reducing the sense of sharply compartmentalized roles of isolated students v. workers and of youth v. isolated age.... Society would be more integrated across the lines that now separate students and workers, youth and age (Carnegie, Less Time, More Options, 1971:2).

No matter when or how long a student studies in a particular program, it is becoming less and less clear that this formal education can prepare him for a lifelong role in a highly developed society, or that it can provide social equity and upward mobility as formerly (Shulman, 1975:6).

Opportunities should be opened for those who are already beyond "college-age", to benefit from further education if they desire it. The entire adult population, present and future, can be considered

potential students. The emphasis on "lifelong learning" will help to soften the boundaries between formal education and life experience. Thus adult education cannot simply be tacked on to an existing structure, but must be fully integrated as part of a lifelong process.

In order for this to be accomplished, higher education must diversify. The diversification should take place upward and outward: "upward to provide adult education or lifelong learning for a very large part of the adult population; outward, to bring it to people in their own homes or workplaces" (Trow, 1973:46). In approaching the concept of lifelong learning, each institution must determine what it can do to help people to educate themselves. This will mean some rethinking of institutional mission and the structures which have solidified over the years.

Colleges and universities in particular must give more thought to this concept. Their responsibilities have expanded, "not only for educating each current generation of young people, but also for promoting and guiding a lifelong effort of continuing self-education" (Mosely, 1971:37). Universities have a unique capacity to analyze problems and conduct research for decision making within society. Other institutions can better carry out other functions, such as uplifting those groups who have been left uneducated or miseducated by the conventional systems. Yet cooperation and sharing of responsibility are vitally necessary among institutions.

Adult Participation in Higher Education

While it may be both politic and realistic to consider all students in institutions of higher education as adults (18 and over), there are some basic differences between the freshman of 18 who has been in school since he was six, and the freshman of 25 who has decided to take the plunge after seven years of work. There seems to be little doubt that most college entrants, particularly in the selective universities, are in the first category.

Age Diversity of Freshmen

Overall estimates of those who delay their entrance a year or more vary considerably: Jencks and Riesman estimate one-third (1968: 31); Martin Trow says 18 percent (1975:13). Trow finds, however, that only six percent are in highly selective universities, compared with 27 percent in junior colleges. The number is thought to be rising, since freshman count for the 1975-76 entering class showed a 7.4 percent increase nationwide, much higher than the normal age cohort would allow. This can perhaps be attributed to the increasing

number of older students and returnees bolstering the ranks (Parker, 1976:9).

Two of the Carnegie Commission-sponsored surveys have also highlighted the increasing age diversity. Peterson found that 26 percent of the colleges indicated a small increase and two percent a substantial increase in delayed applications (1972:23). "Work" was given as the main reason by a large margin, and also accounted for a 17 percent overall gain in deferred admission requests; "stop-outs" increased in 30 percent of the schools. Hodgkinson found that 29 percent of public institutions, six percent of the nonsectarian private, and 17 percent of the sectarian institutions reported increased student heterogeneity by age (1971:11). The larger institutions showed greater age diversity (1971:72).

In comparing "older" freshmen with "typical" undergraduates, Holmstrom (1973) concluded that 62 percent enroll in the two-year colleges, 23 percent in four-year and 14 percent in universities, as compared with 28 percent, 42 percent and 29 percent among average-age students. They tend toward public colleges of a smaller size and less selectivity. Three-fourths of the "older" freshmen are men and often from a disadvantaged background (1973:8). Those who did attend highly selective institutions were more likely to complete their degree program on schedule, however, than were those who went elsewhere (1973:19-20).

Adults on the Campus

If we define "adult" as 22 years of age and older in order to eliminate the vast majority of the traditional age group, we still find that over 42 percent of the student population can be considered adults. In fact, 24.8 percent are 25 or older (Committee on Financing, 1974:23). Thus, the total campus picture--undergraduate and graduate--has much more adult-orientation than might have been expected.

> The presence of such large proportions of adults in the student bodies of colleges and universities calls into question the view that learning beyond the high school is solely a preparation for life. It is, instead, a part of life itself (Carnegie, Toward a Learning Society, 1973:24).

A total of 3.4 million part-time students are enrolled in four-year institutions of whom 77.8 percent are over 25 (Committee on Financing, 1974:25). According to enrollment experts, part-time education will be even more important to many institutions in the

future, as they respond to the growing needs of the nation's adult population (Parker, 1976;8). Enrollments based primarily on secondary school graduates will decline in the next two decades unless new clientele are sought out.

Projections show that the 18-24 year-old group which filled 80 percent of the higher education enrollment in 1970 will decline to 78 percent in 1980 and 74 percent in 1990, "even without emphasis on adult education: (Berendzen, 1974:121). The percentage of white male students 25-29 years old enrolled in degree programs in 1972 increased by 25 percent over 1967; females by 79 percent. In the 30-34 age group, white males rose by 19 percent and females by 26 percent. Black males increased by 150 percent and black females by over 300 percent in the same period; of course, their relative numbers were so small that any increase would have been dramatic (Carnegie, Opportunities for Women, 1973:39).

Potential Pool of Older Students

If we look at the overall participation in all of adult post-secondary education, we can get a better picture of the potential clientele for colleges and universities. In 1971-72, one estimate had nearly 16 million adults participating on a part-time basis, 21 percent of whom were in degree programs in four-year institutions (3.4 million), an increase of 19 percent from three years previously (Gilford, 1975; Committee on Financing, 1974:24-25). Knowles, in an overview of the entire realm of adult education, estimates that participation of adults in higher education programs has risen dramatically over the last fifty years. His figures show 200,000 participants in 1924; 300,000 in 1934; 500,000 in 1950; and 1.5 million in 1955 (1962:251).

Another study estimates that eighty million Americans between 18 and 60 are "probably interested in continuing their learning, and some thirty-two million adults have most likely recently engaged in learning" (Carp, 1974:49). The same study estimates that only six percent attend programs in four-year colleges (1974:33), and only one in fourteen receives credit toward a college degree (1974:39). Interest in credit programs "is most characteristic of individuals who already have some postsecondary education and are relatively high on the economic ladder" (1974:50).

Among the working population, 25 and older, there are already 15 million college graduates, many of whom may be ready for further professional training or intellectual development, and 71 million high-school graduates who either never started or never finished

college (Boyer, 1975:21). Of these, Boyer estimates that 25 million are continuing their education in some way, but only one in nine is in a college or university program.

Of those "new learners" who do enroll in college programs, most have had some previous college, with 50 percent having completed four-year programs. They are male (60-90 percent), white (85 percent), middle class with many from managerial or professional ranks, and tend to be over 35. They have incomes in the $12-15,000 range and rank high on desire to achieve, persistence, independence and motivation. In many ways they are an "older version" of the conventional 18-24 year-old student (Hodgkinson, 1975:51).

Nationally in 1960, approximately 960,000 adults 25-34 were in college programs; in 1970 this climbed to 1,385,000, and in 1973 to 1,832,000. Adding to this the 780,000 over 34 (Berendzen, 1974:121) means that about 2.6 million adults over 25 are now in college. This figure represents about 28 percent of the enrollment in the collegiate sector of 9.3 million students. This is a sizeable proportion and, while unevenly distributed, it does force all institutions to consider the older student as a significant factor in future enrollment projections. From census data we can roughly estimate that 60 percent of these are in undergraduate programs, or about 1.5 million (Bureau of Census figures).

Trends and Implications

"As older learners participate in postsecondary education, a broader age range must be adopted as a basis for predicting and describing the student population" (Mangelson, 1974:18). The broader range of age groups and many part-time students have already "had a major impact on all parts of the higher education system" (McCarthy, 1975:81). Sidney Tickton foresees a considerable increase in the number of adults enrolled in college. He assumes that continuing education for adults "will expand substantially and will include extensive training or retraining of persons beyond college age to meet expanding professional and technical demands of business and industry" (1968:11).

The Carnegie Commission foresees a shortage of traditional-aged students in the 1980's:

> This will lead to efforts by many colleges to enlarge their pool of potential students by accepting more adults and more part-time enrollees regardless of age and to the acceptance of more community college transfers

> by four-year colleges; to greater endeavors at competitive recruitment; and to attempts to make each campus more attractive by holding down tuition and by improving programs from a student point of view (Priorities for Action, 1973:46).

Expansion of this sort would require many accommodations which I will discuss in later sections. But even if strong efforts were made to appeal to a new and broader clientele, success is not guaranteed. Looked at as a total picture, the community college and comprehensive college stand to gain most by the increase in part-time students of all ages, because of their location and their lower tuition (Carnegie Foundation, 1975:69). Further enrollment shifts will be a factor of geographic location. Midwestern states, for example, generally will show below-average growth. In terms of shares of the total enrollment, however, it seems better for institutions to appeal to all ages rather than only the 18-21 year-old group and to provide for part-time as well as full-time students (Carnegie Foundation, 1975:78-81).

Traditional programs will not have to be replaced, but a new mix may be required which increases options for the adult population. Howard Bowen, the most optimistic projector of enrollments, prefers to deal in "possibilities":

> The limits of education are set, not by the dimensions of the jobs we see around us, but by the capacity of human beings to learn. And we are today far from reaching this capacity. ... The higher educational industry might well double or triple in size during the balance of this century and a totally new kind of society might be created in which the level and depth of education and the richness of culture would surpass that ever before achieved or even imagined (in Carnegie Foundation, 1975:40).

As confusing and uncertain as the future trends are, some implications are evident for the university in the future:

1. The adult population can be a significant factor in student enrollments;

2. Flexibility will be important in order to maintain stable enrollments;

3. A clear sense of institutional mission will be necessary if decisions are to be made to appeal to and recruit from a nontraditional clientele;

4. A coherent strategy will be essential if new programs and technologies are to be incorporated for educating this new student body. These implications will be explored in depth in the following pages.

III. THE ADULT LEARNER

Let me read with open eyes
the book
my days are writing--
and learn.

-- Dag Hammarskjöld

A Comparison with Traditional-Aged Students

In the traditional life-cycles of the past, the stages of existence were almost rigidly separate and college served one particular stage of life. First college, then work, with little thought of reversing or intermixing the order. "Adult students were viewed as retreads in a kind of salvage operation, sadly out of step with the learning cycle and even with the life cycle itself... the campus became a kind of ghetto for the young" (Boyer, 1974:6). Yet, as we have seen, historically the best intention was that education not end with youth but rather move into a "self-directed" phase, with the adult freed from the formal system to plan his own pattern of learning. Indications are that those who have caught onto this "lifelong" thrust in American educational philosophy are beginning to be more active in adult learning. Those who are better educated tend to be more active in adult learning, and as this group expands, so does the need for adult education (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965:20-22).

It is true that the middle and upper classes are emphasizing continuing education more, for professional improvement and intellectual stimulation in leisure moments, but few in the lower classes have approached it except in the traditional sense of "better job attainment":

> The paradox is that the segment of the population which may realize the greatest increment of free time in an age of automation is, on the one hand, the least well-prepared to handle it, and on the other, the least likely to turn to continuing education to develop and expand its spare-time interests. And it is this, perhaps, that constitutes the most critical challenge to the adult educators of the future (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965:22).

There are strong external forces at work in society which may inhibit the adult learner or make him fear that he is somehow essentially "different" or even inferior to his youthful counterpart. Our culture values youth, and the adult in a traditional college atmosphere may feel a strong pressure to be "youthful" instead of relying on his own particular talents and brand of maturity. Further, our society is work- and production-oriented. The full-time student is not a producer, but this is more or less accepted before one enters the work force, as in the case of youth. For an adult to drop out of the work force to go back to school may lead him to moments of self-doubt about his worth.

Our communities are involvement-oriented. The adult learner may have to leave a lot behind to go back to college. No matter how influential he was, he loses status. Yet precisely because of the experience he has undergone and the status he has held, he can often finish his program more quickly and fit into even higher positions. His motivation is often very high and his community's investment can usually be more than repaid in a short time.

Perhaps the most crucial of the external forces that can influence him, and sadly so, is the materialistic economy which pervades our environment. Losing his economic status and independence can be demoralizing to an adult. This, coupled with the vestiges of discrimination against the former wage-earner ("he should be able to afford it") may lead him to forego further educational opportunities. These external environmental factors can lead to internal rationalizations such as fear of failure, "education is for the young", or a sense of futility. These barriers, which are far from essential differences between adults and youth as learners, may nevertheless prove difficult to overcome.

Adult learners have been affected by their prior educational experiences and bring many hopes and aspirations to their new learning environment. The stakes are high, both for them and for the institution that admits them. They want to be active participants in their learning, they expect it to be meaningful in light of their past experiences and future goals. They have most likely given up much in order to return to school and as a consequence expect much. If there were no needs or gaps in their education, they probably would not have come; but neither do they bring a tabula rasa, ready to soak up a prepackaged curriculum with little relevance for their future.

An institution educating adults must be cognizant of these forces and restructure learning situations to accommodate them. In doing so it would be valuable to look at the positive factors which adult students can introduce to the college environment. Older students bring an ingredient of practical experience to purely theoretical discussions by their observations and experience. The younger students on the other hand, can

> provide a fresh, dynamic, and inquiring facet to the discussions which might otherwise be too pragmatic and earthbound. This intermixture of all ages ... not only acclimates younger students to an atmosphere of lifelong learning but also, in many classes, improves the quality and nature of the learning experience itself (Liveright, 1968:152).

Carp, in his recent study on adult learning interests and experiences, suggests that: "Academic professionals will find it somewhat disheartening that adult Americans are so little intersted in further study in traditional liberal arts subjects ..." (1974:20). This may not be a factor distinguishing them from younger students, however, if we look at the general decline of interest among all college-goers for these subjects. It might be unrealistic, then, to appeal to an adult clientele in order to bolster declining enrollments in these areas.

Differences between the adult learner and the traditional-aged student--if they exist at all--are positive ones which can work to the advantage of both the older student and the institution which opens its doors to him.

Adult Learning Ability

It seems likely that institutions used to a youthful clientele may be singularly ill-equipped to handle adults unless they can adopt a new attitude and an adequate basis in theory. Without this adaptation, the learning that adults will encounter is likely to be ineffective and may result in lasting psychological harm. For the mature person, a return to college can be a period of renewal, of developing insights into himself, and of achieving self-actualization. As educators, we can help him to realize this goal (Glass, 1974).

The first step in developing a new attitude is once and for all to put to rest the myth that "adults can't learn". While the universities may not subscribe to this myth to any great degree--witness the new insights of older faculty members--it is still prevalent in society and contributes to the psychological pressure on the adult student which may affect his efforts to learn and his acceptance on the campus. We must recognize that it is an expediency that adults continue to learn, and a threat to our very society to have them stop learning.

Thorndike was the first to try to dissolve the myth. In 1928 he suggested that adults' learning ability was not necessarily diminished because of age alone (Widman, 1975:26). He found that mental abilities grow rapidly during adolescence, peak in the early 20's, and from there they decline very gradually, perhaps up to one percent a year.

Almost from the time he made these conclusions, Thorndike touched off a further controversy. It was almost as if he had substantiated the folk attitude rather than tried to dispel it. While he intended that adults <u>not</u> be discouraged from learning since age was not a significant factor, his conclusion was not always interpreted positively.

One of his students, Lorge, began to dispute the conclusion. He said that Thorndike had been measuring speed, not power. Power to learn persists throughout life as long as you exercise it and are in good health. Owens' longitudinal study (1953) also showed this; in measuring the same group over 30 years, no decline in learning power was evident. Thorndike had cut across various age cohorts and saw "declines" where there were none. The level of attainment is lower for older age groups, but not for individuals growing older (McClusky, 1971).

The more educated age groups of recent decades show more inclination to continue learning. Those adults who engage in learning activities throughout their lives seem to lose very little of their intellectual efficiency (Knowles, 1950:17-18). Thus we can discern that generation and level of educational attainment are more significant than chronological age. A higher level of educational attainment is likely to lead to more persistence in learning at older ages for the present generation. Perhaps Thorndike's original conclusion can be held more positively now: adults can learn. Nobody over 45 should restrain himself from trying to learn anything because of a belief or fear that he is too old to be able to learn (Mason, 1974).

If age is not a deterrent to learning, perhaps other things are. Speed of learning may vary because of weakened hearing or eyesight. Readjustment to structured learning situations may be more difficult for older persons. Learning may be more "risky" for the older adult as we have already seen. Further, the self-concept of an adult as a "non-learner" may get in the way along with what has been termed a "declining sense of discovery" (McClusky, 1971). Differences such as these deserve recognition, but the required adaptations on the part of institutions to these factors may not entail much more than normal adjustments already made to young learners when they show analogous characteristics.

A Conceptual Framework for Adult Programs

If increasing numbers of mature adults are returning to the classroom, some attention must be paid to their characteristics and needs in designing special programs. We should be able to take advantage of their high motivation and experience in revamping the traditional curriculum. If we are going to integrate adult learners into the university, perhaps it can be compared to the integration of women, a topic of fresh memory to many private institutions. At first the "differences" were emphasized, and then, with a minimum of fanfare, the differences fell into place and integration was accomplished. We have already seen that we must capitalize on the positive difference

between the adult learner and the traditional-aged student. If we have also been successful in discarding the myth that the adult can't learn, our next step might entail rethinking another myth: that there is some essential difference between the education of youth and of adults.

I would hold that education is more unified than that, and in its fundamental concerns can be adapted to any learner irrespective of age. Educators may be guilty of approaching the teaching of adults as if they were children; but that actually points out more mistakes in their pedagogy than in their "andragogy" (helping adults to learn). If the assumptions about adult learning characteristics are valid, they have great implications for the education of youth as well (Knowles, 1970:37-38). This does not mean that the opposite mistakes should be made--treating a child as a sort of "mini-adult"--but in an institution of higher education, age differences are less significant.

All education in a college or university should be based on "andragogy". It starts with a presumption of adulthood, at least the early stages of it. Yet differences are bound to appear as the individual learner is considered: Who is he? What are his goals? Where is he in his development? All learning is ultimately an internal process and educators must almost have a sixth sense to say when it is actually taking place and in whom. But we also know that there are superior conditions for learning, and finding them is the goal of every institution, for all its students of every age.

Arthur Chickering (1969) describes seven basic vectors of development during adolescence and early adulthood: achieving competence, managing emotions, becoming autonomous, establishing identity, freeing interpersonal relationships, clarifying purposes, and developing integrity. Development along these vectors can be accelerated or retarded by colleges depending on how carefully they recognize and use what Chickering calls the "conditions for impact", such as size, curriculum, teaching, residential arrangements, and the like. Even so, the ultimate development of an individual is his alone to achieve. How much an experience affects him depends upon the characteristics he brings to it.

The adult learner should be well on his way to full development on most of these vectors. He will usually bring more "adult" characteristics to an experience to maximize its impact. But the chance is present--and perhaps quite likely--that he is not satisfied with his present state of development. The college faced with mature adults asking for more development--more education--is going to be forced to formulate a conceptual framework for understanding the adult learner.

Chickering develops a useful conceptual framework in a later article "Adult Development--Implications for Higher Education" (1975). The first commitments of adulthood--to work, to marriage and family, to "adult" responsibility--may be reexamined at later stages in life when their long-range implications are more evident. Sometimes changes must be made; at other times a more solid commitment can occur after taking another look at the alternatives. In a person's 30's achievement begins, but in his 40's, as time appears more finite, the limits of success and achievement become more apparent and a person often questions his basic priorities and values. Usually he will reaffirm them with more moderate expectations and drive. In his 50's, a person often mellows and becomes more interested in developing personal relationships (Chickering, 1975:205).

Chickering also looks at the role of age and timing in adult development. When normal events are "on time" they tend not to be experienced as crises. Studies such as these "identify major motives--dilemmas, interests, aspirations, circumstances--which lead students to pursue further education" (1975:207). Understanding the life cycle and the ages of man can help us rethink both content and process since we realize the motives behind the great personal sacrifices of older students. We see

> that the existential questions of meaning, purpose, vocation, social responsibility, dependence, human relationships, which so many adolescents face with difficulty, are reconfronted by many 30, 40, and 60-year-olds (1975:212).

Other theorists look at developmental "stages", which build on one another and are profoundly influenced by interaction with the environment and other persons. Chickering coordinates various theories on ego development, moral and ethical development, and intellectual development to show their interrelationships with motives for education, institutional function, learning processes, orientations toward knowledge, and educational practices. His efforts offer a valuable conceptual framework for colleges' responses (see Chart I on pages 28 and 29).

The various levels of development in the ego, moral and intellectual areas tell us a lot about a person's motives for learning, how he learns, and how he views and uses knowledge. The motives and particular orientations a student brings, in turn, define certain institutional functions or roles which require consistent educational practices. The "conscientious" student, for example, shows certain abilities to analyze and synthesize materials; he probably wants to increase his competence in certain areas and thus is looking for structured situations which give him concrete experience and increase

his confidence and problem-solving ability. The "autonomous" student on the other hand, may be looking for something which will increase his independence and self-knowledge; he may also want to "use" it but in his own way and in his own good time.

Students, according to Chickering, span the full range of ego development. The conscientious and autonomous youth or adult may have already gone beyond institutional orientations which are geared to the lower levels. And yet the self-protective and conformist types also have important purposes which deserve response on the part of the institution. An institution can neither ignore their presence nor keep them out. The complex make-up of individuals as well as groups of students can be very beneficial to an institution if sincere attempts are made by administrators, faculty, and students to understand it.

A better understanding of adult expectations may help an institution to more clearly define its educational goals and programs for its students of all ages. The creation of a climate conducive to adult learning can only enhance the total educational climate for all students. The establishment of new structures for greater participation in curriculum planning, design, and delivery may help uncover the sometimes hidden, often unappreciated, creative talents and untapped stores of knowledge of the faculty. The resources are already there and thoughtful acceptance of the adult learner into the community may help us to bring them out into the open toward perfection.

CHART I.

	Ego Development	Moral Development	Intellectual Development	Motive for Education	Institutional Function	Learning Processes
1	Self-protective	Obedience-punishment oriented.	Memorization, application.	Instrumental; satisfy immediate needs.	Arouse attention and maintain interest; to show how things should be done.	Imitation; acquire information, competence, as given by authority.
2	Conformist	Instrument egoism and exchange, good-boy approval oriented.		Impress significant others; gain social acceptance; obtain credentials and recognition.	Provide predetermined information and training programs; certify skills and knowledge.	
3	Conscientious	Authority, rule and social order oriented.	Analysis, synthesis.	Achieve competence regarding competitive or normative standards. Increase capacity to meet social responsibilities.	Provide structured programs which offer concrete skills and information, opportunities for rational analysis and practice which can be evaluated and cerfied.	Discover correct answers through scientific method and logical analyses. Multiple views are recognized but congruence and simplicity are sought.
4	Autonomous	Social contract, legalistic oriented. Moral principle orientation.	Evaluation	Deepen understanding of self, world, and life cycle; develop increasing capacity to manage own destiny.	Ask key questions; pose key dilemmas; confront significant discontinuities and paradoxes; foster personal experience and personally generated insights.	Seek new experiences; reorganize past conceptions on the basis of new experiences develop new paradigms; create new dialectics.

Adapted from Chickering, 1975, pages 214-216.

CHART I.

What is knowledge?	What use is knowledge?	Where does knowledge come from?	Teaching Practice	Student-Teacher Relationships	Evaluation
A possession; helps one get desired ends; ritualistic actions which yield solutions.	Education to get: means to concrete ends; used by self to obtain effects in world.	From external authority; from asking how to get things.	Lecture-exam.	Teacher is authority, transmitter, judge. Student is receiver, judged.	By teacher only.
General information required for social roles; objective truth given by authority.	Education to be: social approval appearance, status used by self to achieve according to expectations and standards of significant others.	From external authority; from asking what others expect and how to do it.	Teacher-led dialogue or discussion; open "leaderless" learner-centered discussion.	Teacher is a "model" for student identification.	By teacher only. By teacher and peers.
Know how: personal skills in problem solving divergent views resolved by rational processes.	Education to do: competence in work and social roles; used to achieve internalized standards of excellence and to serve society.	Personal integration of information based on rational inquiry from setting goals; from asking what is needed, how things work, and why.	Programmed-learning, correspondence study, televised instruction.	Teacher is an abstraction behind system. Student a recipient.	By system.
Personally generated insight about self and nature of life; subjective and dialectical; paradox appreciated.	Education to become: self-knowledge; self-development; used to transform self and the world.	Personal experience and reflection; personally generated paradigms, insights, judgments.	Contract learning. 1) Time, objectives, activities, evaluation negotiated between student and teacher at outset and held throughout. 2) . . (or) evaluation defined generally by student, modified with experience.	Student defines purposes in colleagial relationship with teacher. Teacher is resource, contributes to planning and evaluation.	By teacher, peers, system, self. Teacher final judge. Same, with self final judge.

IV. THE IMPACT OF THE ADULT LEARNER ON THE UNIVERSITY

The problems of education
are merely reflections
of the deepest problems of our age.
They cannot be solved
by organisation, administration,
or the expenditure of money,
even though the importance of all these
is not denied.
We are suffering from a
metaphysical disease,
and the cure must therefore be
metaphysical.
Education which fails
to clarify our central convictions
is mere training or indulgence.
For it is our central convictions
that are in disorder, and,
as long as the present
anti-metaphysical temper persists,
the disorder will grow worse.
Education, far from ranking
as man's greatest resource,
will then be an agent of destruction,
in accordance with the principle
corruptio optimi pessima.

-- E. F. Schumacher

Expanding an Institutional Mission

The university is only one of many institutions in society which may be involved in adult education. But the adult clientele is important not only to the development of society, but to the overall mission of the university. Their education cannot be seen as an afterthought or as a "political" move. It must be incorporated into the total educational mission of the institution, or not undertaken at all. Decisions against such a move should be based on principles, however, and not on a prejudice that adult instruction is inappropriate for colleges and universities.

Academic Quality

The university has been called upon to perform many diverse tasks throughout its history, sometimes to make use of its collective expertise and possible depth of insight, but often because the tasks needed to be done and no other institution had the capability to do them. Thus, the university has constantly had to reevaluate and, more often than not, expand its mission, always with a close eye on the academic quality of its contribution.

Adult citizens should not be deprived of educational opportunities available to youth, but the offerings of colleges and universities must truly be of "college level". The university, if it has the facilities, the faculty, and the resources, should open up these possibilities to students of all ages who display the motivation and capacities to reach for them.

Each institution must define its distinctive place, limit its tasks and set a priority among them (Petersen, 1960:129). This does not mean trying to meet every need, however timely, or every wish, however pressing. Many of the current problems facing colleges and universities have resulted from hasty, thoughtless expansion of enrollments and programs during the "good times" recently passed. But given the overall adaptability of higher education in this country, over several centuries, it should be possible to make a "quality" response.

The education available at prestigious institutions need not be "threatened" by acceptance of a new clientele of adults, but may in fact be enhanced and ultimately brought closer to its fundamental purposes of expanding intellects and challenging the critical faculties of human beings (Ashby, 1971:31).

Responsibility in an Urban Setting

A university depends upon some community for its survival, for faculty, for students, and for money. The primary community, especially for the urban institution, is the local one, even if its student clientele is national or statewide. A good working relationship with the local government, organizations and citizens can give much support and stability to a university. In return, "the most valuable services that an educational institution could render to its community are centered in the institution's own educational functions" (Carnegie, Campus and the City, 1972:76).

The university should do what is unique to it: provide high quality education and research. In doing so, it cannot overlook the fact that the local residents may also be interested in participating in its programs. Thus, it may need to expand its "role as teacher to include the adult population, especially to those persons who are in critical leadership positions in society" (Haygood, 1962:5). It should bring some of its investigations to bear on solving some of the pressing urban problems beginning right in its home city.

Some colleges and universities have provided education for adult students for a long time, at least in the major cities of America. Many of them have been private and Catholic. In the case of some extension programs, however, the education "is often offered in a spirit of public service or public relations and is not always of the same quality as the education colleges offer to regular students" (Carnegie, Toward a Learning Society, 1973:80). In other cases, education for adults has developed into "continuing education" to show the special character of the university's contribution to it: education as a process of "lifelong learning".

No matter what form the adaptation is to take, it must be understood that the isolated campus in the modern city is an anomaly. Each institution must decide on its own unique role according to its particular objectives and resources. Society needs information and understanding on every issue facing it, but no one institution can be expected to provide all the answers. Differentiation among institutions serving a metropolitan area is essential so that duplication can be avoided, cooperation furthered, and so that each institution--private university, comprehensive four-year college, junior college, and technical institute--can do what it does best and not overextend its resources to the detriment of both the institution and its urban clientele. But some careful and serious commitment of resources and personnel are required of the university in the modern city.

Also important to the university's relationship with urban populations is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity, a positive

readiness to serve the disadvantaged minorities especially in its graduate programs. Serving the needs and solving the problems of urban America is a crucial task of highest priority. Active cooperation among institutions of higher education is essential. There can be buck-passing on this issue. The present needs of urban Americans, who have long stood behind and looked up to the educational institutions in their cities, demand a serious response.

The "New" Clientele and the "Old" Image

Education for a limited 18-22 year-old undergraduate clientele is becoming less and less defensible. Even though some universities still have a seller's market, with four or five qualified applicants for every space, they are becoming more unique in this category each year. Many institutions are broadening their recruitment policies, looking for new constituencies, in particular among the large adult population presumably interested in college work, as well as transfers from two-year colleges. Enrollments are already down at many private colleges and public state colleges (Carnegie, Continuity and Discontinuity, 1973:35-36).

In any consideration of expansion to incorporate students from the adult urban population, it would be shortsighted for an institution to say that it will not expand because it does not need students. The question of institutional mission and urban commitment must be seen as more important than "enrollment". It is my contention that the image of a national institution seriously grappling with these issues would only be enhanced. Creative programs extending the benefits of the university to the adult population would put firm action behind much of the rhetoric on "lifelong" learning.

The concept of the university as a place to form youth to take their place in society is under heavy challenge. It may not be unreasonable to expect some "college-age" youth to decide whether or not to pursue further education immediately after high school, but there should also be some "assurance of further opportunities for education as adult students if a wrong choice has been made" (Ashby, 1971:31). Furthermore, the society they decide to enter changes so rapidly that a decision for or against more education deserves an equal chance to be renewed or changed throughout life.

For decades it has been apparent that adults learn throughout their lives. Universities have often encouraged their graduates to "keep on learning". We have tried to keep our alumni close to us, for moral and financial support. Could we not begin our commitment to formal adult learning opportunities within our institutions with these same alumni? They can form a significant part of our "new" clientele and help us at the same time to change the "old" image that

college is a place for the young to learn and the old to visit.

This network of alumni could serve as the initial new clientele, extending their renewed interest in lifelong learning to their contemporaries throughout the world, to help them adjust more easily to the changing demands of society. The influence on our present student bodies, often overprotected and underchallenged, would be considerable.

> ... We have here one of the strongest calls for continuing education, first, to keep the emerging generation from losing its dreams and goals, and even more importantly, to influence the older generation to react better than most of them are reacting at present (Hesburgh, in Center for Continuing Education, 1971:34).

Developing a Nontraditional Curriculum

Higher education has developed programs primarily for the young, single, unemployed adult who can devote his full time and attention over four years to gain a college degree. The needs of adult students are going to require adjustments in nontraditional ways on the part of institutions: greater flexibility in curriculum and scheduling, in degree requirements, in portability of credits, and in evaluation and crediting of prior experience.

Faculty Involvement

Some of these reforms would be relatively easy and inexpensive--essentially bureaucratic changes such as flexibility for stopping-out, reduced loads for part-time students, lengthening or shortening the time requirements for the degree. But the more essential matters, touching on the academic content of an educational program, require strong faculty involvement and commitment. Where the integration of special adult-oriented programs has happened, it has worked fairly well. The faculty has appreciated the challenge. The problem is how to get faculty involved in the first place.

Under what conditions will nontraditional approaches be accepted by the faculties of universities? Adult education, especially evening extension programs, has long been seen as a marginal activity, perhaps substandard in quality, certainly in pay and prestige for participating faculty. In cases where faculty see possible future cutbacks in their departments, the incentive to recruit more students

is obviously higher. But even here, the likelihood of new students being attracted to an area that is declining in interest to the traditional student is not very strong. Adults are more likely to be enrolled in external-degree and nontraditional programs which rely heavily on part-time faculty and have a higher student-faculty ratio. But often little incentive exists for faculty participation. According to the Commission on Non-Traditional Study: "Systems of faculty reward and promotion should not discriminate against the person who teaches in non-traditional programs" (1973:67).

But even without concrete incentives, the faculty member may still find it challenging to do something about a new situation, to get involved with planning and implementing a new program for highly motivated students. This carries its own prestige and value.

Flexibility in Curriculum

If faculty are of paramount importance to the success of nontraditional programs, curriculum should be their first concern. This does not mean that traditional programs must be replaced, but that new options must be created which are based on the challenges of lifelong learning. To continue to place relatively inflexible reliance on credits and traditional degrees is to emphasize formal education over education itself, and, as we have seen, the adults who are interested in continuing their education have by and large already made that transition. Rigidity in degree requirements and curriculum may be the last significant barrier to true universal access to higher education (Ziegler, 1975:215; Gould & Cross, 1972:49).

Determining the learning needs of the adult population can best begin on the local level, although there are valuable national market surveys which might help (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965; Carp, 1974). Colleges and universities can best determine what the needs are by asking their prospective clients. Then the faculty and administration can decide what resources the university might be able to bring to bear on these needs and what nontraditional approaches can be taken.

It is helpful to look at some of the nontraditional programs that are being tried and the curricular adaptations which have been made to accommodate the adult learner. Harold Hodgkinson (1975) divides the approaches to nontraditional learning into four basic types, recognizing that some program overlap is inevitable.

The "extended campus". Based on the extension movement, this involves external study under existing curricula, leading to tradi-

tional degrees. Adjustments are made in scheduling--time and place, residency requirements, and delivery systems. The Extended Campus of the University of California--with its "1000-mile Campus"--and C.W. Post Weekend College of Long Island University are two rather different examples of this approach (Patton, 1975; Meskill, 1975). The Open University in Great Britain (1971) has also met with great success, making degree level education accessible to every adult regardless of previous school experience (McDonald, 1975:7).

The Special Adult Degree. Programs of this type involve objectives, curriculum content, and methodology to meet the special needs and interests of adults. Most of them are designed to provide a broad liberal education rather than vocational or professional competence. The Bachelor of Liberal Studies program at the University of Oklahoma, begun in 1961, is probably the primary example (Troutt, 1971). But Goddard College, Syracuse, Brigham Young, SUNY-Brockport, and a growing number of other schools are also offering specialized programs.

Oklahoma's program combines guided independent study with intensive residential seminars of 3-4 weeks in three areas, plus an Inter-Area program of integration. The curriculum is based on a flexible book list in each area. Students, the majority of whom are between 25-55, can progress at their own speed. In the first ten years, 249 degrees were given and the average time of completion was roughly four years. The program can accommodate a wide range of academic abilities and the age and background mixing has provided a valuable educational experience for the entire group (Troutt, 1971).

Individualized Study. These programs involve individualized learning contracts making use of work as well as study experience and include a bare minimum of general requirements by the sponsoring institutions. Universities undertaking such programs recognize the value of the work experience, but also insist on close supervision. In 1971, Minnesota Metropolitan State College was started as a program for urban adults using the city as its "campus". Goals are set on an individual basis for competency in five areas: basic learning and communications, civic involvement, career confidence, leisure and recreation, and personal growth and assessment. A variety of individual and group learning experiences are arranged and a degree is earned on the basis of demonstrated competence rather than on accumulated credits (Carnegie, Campus and the City, 1972:55-57).

External Degree Programs. To fill the vacuum between traditional degrees and nondegree offerings of enrichment and job-training

more and more institutions and state coordinating councils are looking at the possibility of "external" degrees. They recognize that some individuals are beyond the age of full-time schooling, yet hungry for a chance to learn, and sensitive to the scholarly community that gives degree-recognition to their academic achievements (Pagano, 1975). In one sense, the term "external" is generic enough to include all of these nontraditional programs in contrast to the "internal" traditional degrees. But since 1970, specific attention has been paid to the evaluation of knowledge from experience rather than from course work. For example, the New York Regents External Degree is awarded to students who demonstrate "knowledge and abilities equivalent to those of a degree recipient from a New York State college or university, regardless of how the candidates had prepared themselves" (Houle, 1973:94-97). Other examples of more complex systems are offered by Florida International University, SUNY Empire State, and the University of Mid America (Houle, 1973:97-105).

Evaluating New Programs

The rapid rise in popularity of nontraditional programs has uncovered a fact that educators have long known: the assessment of prior learning is exceedingly complex and difficult. It is easy to say, "What the student knows, not how many years he has sat through particular courses, is important" (Carnegie, Continuity and Discontinuity, 1973:42). It is another thing altogether to evaluate what he knows if he has learned it outside of the classroom. It is difficult, but it is also crucial. As the Newman Task Force states:

> Eliminating the monopoly of degree-granting of our conventional college will not only help in [reducing its influence with employers], but will also ease many of the pressures at the colleges caused by concern for obtaining a degree rather than an education (1971:88).

The College-Level Examination Program of the Educational Testing Service was begun in 1965 as one means to enable individuals who have acquired their education in uncommon ways to demonstrate their academic achievement. The tests measure no prescribed body of knowledge, but a general level of work in subjects given in the first year of college. For colleges accepting it--over 1100 by 1972--credit by examination has the same financial result as scholarship money and also recognizes the student's academic talent and advances him more quickly toward his scholastic objectives (Houle, 1973:75-76).

The process of evaluating prior learning has been helped along considerably by the work of the Cooperative Assessment of Experimental

Learning (CAEL) which has developed student and faculty guides for documenting and assessing work and life experiences (Knapp, 1977).

The demonstrated positive aspects of external degrees and other innovative programs are many: cooperation among institutions, more effective use of resources, expanding the outreach of existing programs, and a beginning of "organization" in the educational marketplace (Valley, 1975). The hopes are also great: financial savings, better use of faculty and facilities, potential "transformation" of American academic life (Houle, 1973:64). But the pitfalls and uncertainties are also becoming evident. Stephen Bailey (1972) writes of the potential for "academic shoddiness" which could be worse than what already exists on some campuses. He also questions the "fiscal naivete" which assumes that quality education can be cheaper off campus. Samuel Gould (1972) raises further questions about too hasty an entrance into these territories without solidly developed plans. Yet both are optimistic that the new-found flexibility evident in programs of this sort will be beneficial to Americans seeking higher education and may have real positive effects on our existing internal degrees.

The criteria for evaluating new curricular patterns will vary according to the particular goals of an institution, but some basic guidelines are essential: 1) Does the program truly reach out to people now lacking access to the kinds of education they seek and need? 2) How flexible is it? 3) What is the quality of the individualized counseling, instructional materials and supervision, and the methods of assessing competency? 4) Is it fiscally sound? Ultimately the faculty and administration will have to decide if proposed programs are legitimate and worth doing.

Continuing Education and Instructional Technology

The concept of continuing education has long been considered a special contribution of universities in the realm of nontraditional educational opportunities. Continuing education centers demonstrate the unique role that universities can play in updating professional people and using interdisciplinary gatherings to discuss and try to solve current pressing issues in world and national affairs.

The centers are necessarily adjuncts to the university's primary responsibility in undergraduate and graduate-professional education and research, but can serve an important function in assuring that the lifelong-learning needs of individuals in the community are also served. This may mean that continuing education centers will have to expand their offerings in nontraditional ways to improve access. The

policy of conducting prestigious academic conferences and meetings, while necessary and suitable for such facilities, does little to reach the average adult whose thirst for new knowledge is only whetted by his proximity to a university campus. Continuing education does not have to imitate existing forms, it can take on unlimited new approaches shaped to meet the special needs of its clientele.

The possibilities adult higher education offers for the creative use of new forms of instructional technology are also immense. New tools of communication have uses as yet untapped, particularly for the nontraditional classroom. When they are used creatively, they offer great promise for reaching more people with high-quality instruction at lower costs per student. The use of television, video cassettes, programmed instruction, and remote computer terminals can greatly extend the offerings of a college or university beyond their own buildings (Ruyle, 1974:78-80; Walton, 1974:95-115). Successful use with adults may gradually lead to wider use with youth.

The disuse--perhaps even misuse--of new instructional technology is well known. "The educational establishment, with few exceptions, is presently too entrenched and too conservative to make adequate use of the new technology" (Hesburgh, 1974:72-73). Many campuses have rooms full of audio and visual equipment which is seldom used by traditional lecture-oriented faculty or by those who fear a loss of "personal" contact or claim they "never work". But this does not lessen the potential impact of their use.

The options available for new institutional adaptations to a changing society and student clientele are manifold. Carefully planned innovative programs, strongly supported by the faculty and adequately financed, have every possibility of success. They will help to bring the cultural and intellectual richness of the university to ever-greater numbers of adults who live and work in its environs.

Changing Institutional Practices

Most universities are fairly large bureaucracies, with clearly established policies on admissions, registration and credit-reporting procedures, rules and regulations for student life, and a host of student services designed to make the total operation run smoothly and enable the education supervised by the faculty to reach the student effectively. The accommodation of nontraditional programs will require many changes in bureaucratic practices as well as university policies in many areas.

Admissions and Counseling

Selective admissions policies, designed primarily for young people and in a period of enrollment growth and limited access, become barriers to older students. One irony is that in the complex efforts to "balance" the entering freshman class, age is never considered. "Socially, colleges and universities serve to separate--not integrate--the generations in American life" (Newman, 1971:11). The Carnegie Commission asks that colleges reconsider selective admissions policies, "with respect to sex, race, and age. They should then be certain that their admissions practices implement those policies that relate to social justice in higher education" (Continuity and Discontinuity, 1973:46).

In deciding on the admission of older students, "High school or college records should not be ruled inapplicable as evidence of eligibility...simply because the records were acquired some years earlier" (Opportunities for Women, 1973:57). Neither should they be used blindly, since transcripts may reflect earlier grading practices. Complete information about required tests must also be included in recruitment literature since it is usually not readily available to anyone no longer in high school.

In order to sustain the high level of motivation that older students bring to a university, solid advisement and educational counseling facilities are necessary. Good counseling begins before a person enters an institution in order to help him to set his goals and choose the school and programs which can best help him to meet these goals. Unfortunately, many adults must look long and hard for help in these matters.

A college normally confines its counseling services to enrolled students or applicants for admission. Not many counselors are willing or able to help people seek out nontraditional ways of learning. The high school clientele is ready-made for the university and provides its own counselors to advise students in their choice of colleges. Some sort of community-based counseling service is necessary, particularly in urban areas where clear educational opportunities are available to adults. In some areas the community colleges fulfill this function. In any case, it is important that universities encourage the establishment of some such service, to distribute information about all postsecondary opportunities and financial aid available, to provide career counseling, vocational testing, and to help adults plan appropriate educational programs using the resources available in their community.

These facilities would also provide valuable information to

the schools on prospective students and their needs for more informed decisions on the deployment of resources in nontraditional programs. Some sort of mobile counseling unit or "hotline" telephone service may help in smaller urban areas.

In addition, some adaptation may have to be made in registration procedures to accommodate family obligations and work schedules of part-time students. For women returning to school with families at home, the barrier of finding day-care centers at reasonable cost is often a large one. Colleges generally are reluctant to enter peripheral areas such as child care, yet this could be a valuable service for the adult students. The outside responsibilities of adult learners often become large barriers, but with slight adjustment on the part of university offices, a significant hurdle can be overcome.

Campus Life

It is not surprising that students often find rules and regulations arbitrary and without educational basis. If more older students enter a particular college there is a likelihood that some rules will have to be dropped or at least adapted to the changing environment. In recent years the large influx of commuters, including part-time and older students, has changed the nature of many a "closely knit" campus community. Howard Bowen (1975) estimates that only 30 percent of the total higher education enrollment is now residential, in contrast with the 1950's, when much "parental" supervision was still possible on the campus in many forms. Incorporating more commuters and part-time students, while not necessarily a threat to the integrity of residential programs, does run the risk of relegating the new students to a second-class status.

> Commuters and residents begin their college careers with an unequal start which strongly favors the residents. The gap between them grows. Residents have access to, find, and are forced to encounter diverse experiences and persons who spur them on their way. Access, discovery, and encounter occur much less for commuters and they continue in circumstances that add weights to their preexisting handicaps...(Chickering, 1974:85).

Commuter students are naturally less involved in cultural or social activities, which could lead them to rapidly feel out of place and lose some of the initial fervor which brought them into the university. Short-term residential experiences would seem feasible

and could enable them to benefit from the total living-learning experience of the campus. Residents can assist, too, by "welcoming adult students into what is now the 'youth culture' of college" (Carnegie, Less Time, More Options, 1971:27).

It is perhaps inevitable that expansion of nontraditional options in a university will somewhat reduce the chances of the "common bond" that has existed among students on the campus and alumni later in life. But in many ways "this has been happening anyway, and ... the gains will outweigh the losses" (Carnegie, Priorities for Action, 1973:47). The extracurriculum and campus life, if we really believe in their educational value, will need rethinking as much as the curriculum--if this value is to be extended to the new adult learner.

Financial Implications

Universities have been geared financially to the operation of stable programs for full-time students. Both income and expenditures can be planned in advance based on enrollments and tuition charges. In a period of little or no growth, when budgets are tighter and stability harder to maintain, highly experimental programs are not easily approved. They are necessarily somewhat unpredictable in both cost and enrollments. Further, they may offer competition to traditional--"stable"--programs. Many schools which have moved into extension and evening programs have done so when the market was relatively clear-cut, expenses were predictable, and the programs often could be turned into moneymakers. State-supported institutions usually have not been able to count on any significant support for this type of program since it is seen as less important than the primary daytime undergraduate curriculum. In other words, "adults pay their own way, whereas youth are subsidized" (Carnegie, New Students and New Places, 1971:112).

Financing is undoubtedly one of the variables that influences policy in any institution. But it is equally true that few educational institutions ever have "enough" money to implement all their dreams. The question is, should financing in itself govern the educational policy of a college or university? It has always been the case that some schools have been able to work educational miracles on low budgets, while others have full coffers but are perennially bankrupt for ideas.

A successful venture into nontraditional adult education programs will require careful planning of the program itself--not excluding fiscal responsibility, mustering the human resources of the institution in its support, and finally the flexibility that

is necessary with anything outside of the traditional. If the cause is seen as beneficial to the institution, then every effort should be made to implement it. On the other hand, if the resources just are not there, then it would be better not tried no matter how appealing the cause.

Howard Bowen has made an attempt to estimate costs for one non-traditional program--the external degree. He uses an institution of 10,000 resident students, and his estimates are based on 4000 additional external students, or 1000 full-time equivalents. The total costs of $1,675,000 would come to $1675 per FTE per year, or just over $200 per student course enrollment. This already compares favorably with estimates of the "traditional" costs, averaging over $2000 per student per year. Bowen feels that this is a realistic possibility for institutions to implement now. As experience is gained and enrollment perhaps begins to rise, the costs might decline gradually. But he does not anticipate that the cost differential with traditional programs would ever be dramatic. "Tailor-made programs, if they contain genuine personal elements of instruction, counseling, and examinations, are likely to be quite costly no matter what the scale of operation" (Commission on Non-Traditional Study, 1973:151-163).

Bowen argues in favor of comparable tuition per credit hour for both programs to avoid creating two student groups--lower income as external and higher as internal students. Since external students would normally be wage-earners and part-time, their cost could be spread out over a longer period of time. Also, an institution would not want to encourage resident students to switch to lower-cost external status.

From the students' point of view in financing his education, some adjustments may have to be made, such as equal treatment of part-time and full-time students. The restructuring of government priorities in financing may give more incentive to institutions of higher education to move in new directions. It would also provide more equal access to programs--traditional and nontraditional--for students who have up to now been unable to obtain a higher education (Committee for Economic Development, 1973:51).

The Carnegie Commission proposed that all high school graduates be allotted two years of postsecondary education whenever they wish to use it (Less Time, More Options, 1971:20). The Carnegie Council (1975:22) encouraged policies of low or no tuition in the first two years of public postsecondary education, although this would be difficult to implement without substantial aid to private colleges. There is no doubt that adult education prospects--with little or no

parental aid and fewer scholarship possibilities--find high tuition an extreme barrier.

Discrimination against part-time students in tuition charges and financial aid programs has also been a problem. Surveys have shown that in 1971, 58.6 percent of four-year institutions charged higher rates per credit hour for part-time students (Committee on Financing, 1975:54); and 34 percent make no financial aid available to part-time students or to the institutions that admit them.

Various proposals for more equitable financing have been made for tax rebates, educational "insurance" programs, "entitlement" for all citizens, and special loan programs. In October, 1975, Senator Mondale introduced the "Lifetime Learning Act". This would "focus federal efforts on the development of a lifetime learning society" (Shulman, 1975:28), by authorizing funds for curriculum development and training for teachers of part-time adult students (Higher Education Daily, October 20, 1975). Efforts are being made, but results as yet are undetermined.

Changing our educational philosophy to that of "lifelong learning" will be a slow process, requiring adjustments and risks on the part of institutions in launching new programs, on the part of government in encouraging them, on the part of business and industry in supporting them, and on the part of citizens in making them work.

Redefining a Mission--Summary

There are indications that higher education has shown a subtle prejudice against older students. Yet the potential benefits of their presence on the traditional campus are now becoming more widely recognized. Their high level of motivation, the maturity and perspective they can add to discussions, and their life and work experiences, can help to make the college a more balanced community. The willingness some colleges have shown to provide regular campus offerings at more convenient times and places, while helpful and necessary, does not seem to be enough to meet the goals of many adults for lifelong learning and continuing education for personal and career development. In areas fortunate enough to have major universities, these institutions must be prepared to serve the increasing number of older persons interested in more education.

New problems will undoubtedly emerge. Adult education will make demands on the faculty and they will have to decide what is appropriate to the university and what is not. The administration will have to decide whether some of the resources of the university

can or should be directed toward adults. Students will be challenged by the presence of adults in their midst, both in the classroom and in their daily lives.

Change may come slowly to a university campus, but it also must come constantly. We have adjusted to new student clientele in the past, long ago the emerging middle class, and in more recent times the women and minorities who had long been excluded from equal opportunity on most campuses. Now a positive and creative response to the older student is asked of higher education. We must understand the challenge and demonstrate once again our willingness to further refine and perfect our institutional mission.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Alice laughed.
"There's no use trying," she said,
"One can't believe impossible things."

"I dare say you haven't had much practice,"
said the queen.
"When I was your age
I always did it
for half an hour a day.
Why sometimes I've believed
as many as six impossible things
before breakfast."

-- Lewis Carroll

Most universities do not "need" more students, now or in the forseeable future, if they look at the large, ready-made clientele of academically qualified high-school graduates. They are in no way forced to expand their pool of potential students. If they choose to maintain their present policies and student mix, they have no reason to fear for the immediate future.

On the other hand, I believe that the present limited age span among both our undergraduates and most of our graduates is less than desirable. Universities have long been "youthful" places and the public at-large recognizes and in some ways canonizes this image. Generations of our graduates have gained much from their campus experience. The close camaraderie and common culture they have shared has persisted in the form of strong alumni loyalty to many universities. But these institutions have changed much in history. They have often accommodated new trends in education while maintaining a strong commitment to the growth of the "whole person". Some will fear that changing the student makeup will damage the "positive" image that they have. To the contrary, I feel that any attempt to serve a broader clientele can only enhance the image, not damage it.

The educational advantages of having more older students in our midst will be significant. Expanding and mixing age groups will intensify the impact of both classroom and campus on all of our students, young and old. Further, the new opportunities we can provide to adults of all ages will redound to the benefit of our universities, our cities, and eventually to our nation. The maturity and experience the adult learner can bring to our campus will go a long way toward helping us to perform up to our full abilities as outstanding educational institutions.

In this study I have tried to approach the topic of the adult learner in the university from a historical, philosophical and organizational perspective. In order for the presence of the adult learner to have any significant impact on the traditional university, however, the individual institution must consider its own history and organizational structure. From this consideration concrete policy statements and implications will emerge. From my own study I offer five suggested policy statements and some of the implications which would flow from them.

1. <u>The university should expand its educational mission to concretely recognize the potential contributions of the adult learner in all of its classroom and campus experiences.</u> To do this it would be necessary:

- to make a conscious effort to broaden the age distribution in both our undergraduate and graduate student population.

- to continually reevaluate our curriculum to maximize its impact on the students of all ages by incorporating the latest and best discoveries in learning theory and developmental psychology.

- to strive to develop new and nontraditional programs both in the classroom and on the campus in which participants can profit from the mature life and work experiences of our older students.

- to "use" our national position and reputation to encourage more than a rhetorical commitment to "lifelong learning" among all who look to us with respect.

2. The university should enter into close cooperation with all higher educational institutions in its metropolitan area to insure that the entire adult community is well served by the collective institutional presence. To do this it would be necessary:

- to undertake an extensive survey of the educational needs of the area, in close collaboration with the other institutions, to more clearly identify each institution's target population and to enhance its program development.

- to establish a cooperative educational counseling center in conjunction with the neighboring institutions and the city agencies, to serve all adults of the metropolitan area.

- to begin discussions with other institutions on the potential need for a joint degree program.

3. The university's continuing education function should be dramatically broadened, in scope and financial support, so that persons from near and far may find here a home for lifelong learning. To do this it would be necessary:

- to expand the scope and vision of our "centers" for continuing education to make significantly better use of our human and academic resources in providing short-term, high-quality educational offerings to more area adults interested in updating their knowledge and broadening their understanding.

- to recognize that many of our alumni have been touched deeply by what they have discovered on the campus--about themselves and their world. We must encourage them to return, not just

for nostalgic reasons, but to actively continue their search for knowledge, through special courses, summer programs, and "sabbaticals", always inviting them to share their experiences and doubts with our present undergraduates in the classroom and the residence hall.

4. The university should reevaluate its institutional practices, particularly in regard to admissions on all levels, so that age and experience can be weighed more heavily in favor of a candidate than is presently the case. To do this it would be necessary:

- to consciously increase our applicant pools by advertising far beyond our traditional "feeder" schools, encouraging qualified applicants of all ages to apply.

- to revise our admissions formulas to coincide with an applicant pool that will possibly include people whose high school records bear little or no relation to their present potential.

- to actively seek out top students from community and junior colleges nationwide who may want to transfer into programs we are interested in expanding such as engineering and some of the liberal and fine arts.

- to weigh life and work experience much more heavily for our graduate and professional programs particularly in law schools and MBA programs. The "extra" qualities that older students can bring to these programs are immense and the quality of the classroom experience can be boosted immeasurably by a more questioning and issue-oriented student body.

- to design a more flexible academic schedule, to better serve adult learners and better utilize our facilities and human resources. Some evening courses may prove popular to adults from the area and enable them to mix in the classroom with our younger students who already show a proclivity toward nighttime activity.

- to continue to experiment with new programs in the summer, with mini-courses, special institutes, and problem-seminars, both credit and non-credit, oriented toward nontraditional students, alumni, and adults from the community. These should primarily be centered on topics of pressing concern to each particular university.

- to encourage older students to live in and visit the residence halls as much as possible, so that they can benefit from the best aspects of our residential traditions and at the same time

offer their insights and maturity as a model to our younger students.

- to offer special incentives to our graduates who spend time in the Peace Corps and other volunteer programs, to enroll in our graduate and professional programs, and to share their experiences with us upon their return.

5. The university should commit the necessary financial resources to make lifelong learning opportunities a reality. To do this it would be necessary:

- to "risk" the expense of carefully planned new programs, even though the returns may never balance the costs.

- to expend what is necessary to make sure our printed literature and information clearly demonstrates our university-wide commitment to lifelong learning.

- to insure that there is widespread involvement in budgeting and allocating funds for special programs and events, so that--in view of our limited resources--we do not let individual interests outweigh our common goals.

- to revamp our tuition-charge structure to accommodate these new programs and students. This would not mean a "cut rate" for adult students but, rather, consistently high-quality offerings at equitable rates, with the availability of financial aid and deferred-payment plans.

- to make the many minor adjustments in day-to-day campus life which make the campus more attractive and accessible to older students such as special hours for placement and counseling offices, libraries, athletic facilities, and student centers.

These policies are not startlingly new, but their adaptation would offer the potential for matching the vast resources of our universities with the vibrant and ageless resources of much of our adult population. Each of us has at times claimed that our university is "a special place". With the concerted effort of all who now make this place "home" for their minds and hearts, we can become--for all who look to us in hope--"that uncommon school we want", that "arch over the darker gulf of ignorance which surrounds us".

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